

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of November 13, 2007 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. However, the Examiner is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5, 8, 12, 13, 15-20, 23, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,642,346 to Janes, *et al.* (hereinafter Janes). Claims 7, 9-11, 14, 22, 24-26, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Janes in view of U.S. Published Patent Application 2004/0119743 to Xu (hereinafter Xu).

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the stated rejections, Applicants nevertheless have amended the claims so as to expedite prosecution by emphasizing certain aspects of the invention. Applicants respectfully note, however, that such amendments are not intended and should not be interpreted as the surrender of any subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully reserve the right to present the original version of any of the amended claims in any future divisional or continuation applications from the present application.

In particular, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 13, 16, and 28 to further emphasize certain aspects of the invention. Applicants also have amended or cancelled certain dependent claims to maintain consistency among the claims. As discussed below, the claim amendments are fully supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by the claim amendments presented.

Certain Aspects Of The Invention

It may be useful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention prior to addressing the cited references. One embodiment of the invention, as typified by Claim 1, is an electronic commerce method. The method can include determining one or more e-commerce partners. After determining one or more e-commerce partners, a further step can be performed with respect to each e-commerce partner so as to determine whether one or more of the e-commerce partners is an active partner based on at least one predetermined criteria. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0023], lines 4-7 ; see also paragraph [0039], lines 2-4.)

More particularly, the determination can be made on the basis of one or more of the following steps: detecting whether a transaction has occurred with the e-commerce partner within a designated time period; determining whether transactions involving the e-commerce partner exceed a designated valuation threshold; determining whether a transaction involving the e-commerce partner exceeds a designated data size; and determining whether the e-commerce partner has a preference level above a designated preference level. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0024], lines 1-13.)

The method can further include presenting a partner identifier within a commerce graphical user interface for the e-commerce partner, wherein within the commerce graphical user interface the partner identifier is an expandable node; presenting an expansion of at least one of the nodes within the commerce graphical user interface; and with respect to each such expansion, presenting at least one transaction identifier as a child node of the expanded node, wherein each transaction identifier represents an electronic commerce transaction between a user of the commerce graphical user interface and the e-commerce partner. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0041], lines 1-7.)

The method can additionally include categorizing a node associated with at least one of a transmission and an e-commerce partner; visually differentiating the node from

other nodes at the same node level and at a different node level based upon a category of the node; and assigning responsible personnel to transactions based on predetermined rules. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraphs [0020] and [0025]; see also original Claim 12).

The Claims Define Over The Cited References

It was asserted in the section "Response to Arguments" on pages 7-8 of the Office Action that the feature of automatic determination of an active partner is not recited in the claims. Although the word "automatic" is not explicitly recited in the claims, it is implied from the claims because the invention is directed to provide functions "on behalf of" the user, which implies "automatic" action without needing user's run-time decision. Also, it is noted that Applicants are not required to verbally recite all the arguments made in the response so long the arguments are logically supported by the claims. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended the independent claims to recite that the determination as to whether an e-commerce partner is an active partner is based on at least one predetermined criteria, which differ from a user's runtime decision.

It was also asserted in the section "Response to Arguments" on pages 7-8 of the Office Action that Janes teaches the display of active partners to be customers with orders (col. 8, lines 19-21). As already discussed in the previous response, identifying whether or not a customer has an order provides no indication as to when the order was placed. Moreover, there is no indication in Janes as to whether the order was placed within a designated time period. Using the method of the present invention, some of the partners categorized as an active partner according to Janes may not be identified as an active partner because the order may be too old or may not have been placed within a designated time period.

Further, according to the present invention critical elements such as the distinction between consumers and trading partners or "active" and "inactive" partners are depicted visually differently (using different colors or different icons, see Specification, paragraph [0020]). Janes differentiates a vendor icon (vendor 2) from an order icon (order 901) (see Fig. 2G). However, Janes does not differentiate the icons of the vendors of different types. In other words, Janes does not differentiate icons at the same tree level.

In addition, the present invention includes the ability to assign responsible personnel to transactions based on predetermined rules and have that information depicted on the GUI. For example, when an important e-commerce partner desires personal assistance, that partner can be advanced to the head of a waiting queue and/or can be instantly connected to particular service personnel. In another example, when an error occurs with a highly profitable transaction, the error can be immediately routed to the most qualified support personnel available. See Specification, paragraph [0025]. This aspect of the present invention is not disclosed in any of the cited references.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that none of the cited references, whether alone or in combination, expressly or inherently teaches every feature recited in Claims 1, 13, 16, and 28. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that Claims 1, 13, 16, and 28 each define over the prior art. Applicants further respectfully submit that, whereas each of the remaining claims depends from Claim 1, 13, 16, or 28 while reciting additional features, these dependent claims likewise define over the prior art.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the

undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: January 14, 2008

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